

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTERPRETERS IN THE OREGON COURTS

1. ACCURACY AND COMPLETENESS

The interpreter shall render a complete and accurate interpretation or sight translation, without altering, omitting anything from, or adding anything to what is stated or written, and without explanation.

2. REPRESENTATIONS OF QUALIFICATIONS

The interpreter shall accurately and completely represent his or her certifications, training, and pertinent experience. The court should reassess the interpreter's qualifications each time the interpreter is engaged to interpret in court for a non-English speaking party or witness.

3. IMPARTIALITY AND AVOIDANCE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST—COURT OR PROCEEDING INTERPRETER

The interpreter shall be impartial and unbiased and shall refrain from conduct that may give an appearance of bias or conflict of interest. The interpreter shall disclose to the judge any real bias or interest in the parties or witnesses in a case, or any situation or relationship that may be perceived by the court, any of the parties, or any witnesses as a bias or interest in the parties or witnesses in a case.

4. IMPARTIALITY AND AVOIDANCE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST—INTERPRETER APPOINTED TO WORK WITH STATE-PAID, APPOINTED ATTORNEY

An interpreter appointed to work with a state-paid, appointed attorney shall refrain from conduct that may give an appearance of *personal* bias or conflict of interest. The interpreter so appointed may appear to have the natural professional bias that occurs because the interpreter is part of the appointed legal team. The interpreter appointed to work with an appointed attorney shall disclose to the attorney any real bias or interest in the parties or witnesses in a case, or any situation or relationship that may be perceived by the court, any of the parties, or any witnesses as a personal bias or interest in the parties or witnesses in a case. The appointed attorney shall either petition the court for the appointment of a different interpreter to the case, thereby releasing the interpreter from the interpreter's obligation in the case, or the attorney shall bring the situation to the attention of the court and opposing party, on the record. If the attorney fails to bring the conflict to the attention of the court, the interpreter must notify the court of a potential conflict of interest. This disclosure shall not include privileged or confidential information. If all of the parties agree that the interpreter may serve on the case, the interpreter may remain appointed to the case.

5. PROFESSIONAL Demeanor

Interpreters shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the dignity of the court and shall be as unobtrusive as possible.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Interpreters shall understand the rules of privileged and other confidential information and shall protect the confidentiality of all privileged and other confidential information.

7. RESTRICTION OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Interpreters shall not publicly discuss, report, or offer an opinion concerning a matter in which they are or have been engaged, even when that information is not privileged or required by law to be confidential.

8. SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Interpreters shall limit themselves to interpreting or performing sight translating and shall not give legal advice, express personal opinions to individuals for whom they are interpreting, or engage in any other activities that may be construed to constitute a service other than interpreting or translating.

9. ASSESSING AND REPORTING IMPEDIMENTS TO PERFORMANCE

Interpreters shall assess at all times their ability to deliver their services. When interpreters have any reservation about their ability to satisfy an assignment competently, they shall immediately convey that reservation to the court.

10. DUTY TO REPORT ETHICAL VIOLATIONS

Interpreters shall report to the court any actions by any persons that may impede their compliance with any law, any provision of this code, or any other official policy governing court interpreting and sight translating.

11. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Interpreters shall continually improve their skills and knowledge and advance the profession through activities such as professional training and education and interaction with colleagues and specialists in related fields.